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A N
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
P R O G R E S S
O F T H E
Reformation of Manners,
I N

England, Scotland, and Ireland,
And other Parts of *Europe and America,*

With some Reasons and plain Directions for our hearty
and vigorous Prosecution of this Glorious Work.

In a Letter to a Friend.

To which is added,
The *Special Obligations* of MAGISTRATES
to be diligent in the Execution of the Penal-Laws
against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, for the Effect-
ing of a *National Reformation*.

The Ninth Edition with considerable Additions.

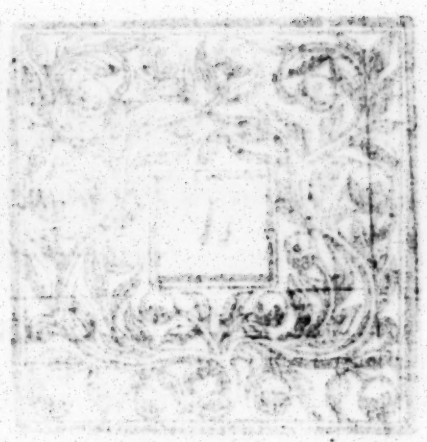
L O N D O N,

Printed by J. Downing in Bartholomew-Close near Smithfield:
And are to be Sold by him, and T. Leigh and D. Midwinter
in St. Paul's-Church-Yard, 1702.





Our last Examination and Complaints, We most seriously and religiously consider. There is an indispensable Duty on us, to be careful, above all other things, to preserve and advance the Honour and service of Almighty God, and to disengage





By the QUEEN,
A PROCLAMATION,
For the Encouragement of
PIETY and VIRTUE,
And for the Preventing and Punishing of
Vice, Prophaneness, and Immorality.

ANNE R.



HEREAS on Our Accession to the Throne, We thought fit, by the Advice of Our Privy Council, to Issue out Our Royal *Proclamation*, for the Encouragement of *Piety and Virtue*, and for the Preventing and Punishing of *Vice, Prophaneness, and Immorality*: And whereas We have been informed, That Our Laws mentioned in the said *Proclamation* have not been executed according to Our Just Expectation and Commands; We most seriously and religiously considering, That it is an indispensable Duty on Us, to be careful, above all other things, to preserve and advance the Honour and Service of Almighty God, and to discourage

By the QUEEN,

and suppress all *Vice, Prophaneness, Debauchery, and Immorality*, which are so highly displeasing to God, so great a Reproach to Our Religion and Government, and (by means of the frequent ill Examples of the Practicers thereof) have so fatal a Tendency to the Corruption of many of Our Loving Subjects, otherwise Religiously and Virtuously disposed, and which, (if not timely remedied) may justly draw down the Divine Vengeance on Us and Our Kingdoms: We also humbly acknowledging, That We cannot expect the Blessing and Goodness of Almighty God (by whom Kings and Queens Reign) and on which We entirely rely) to make Our Reign happy and prosperous to Our Self and Our People, nor hope for the Divine Assistance to deliver Us from the great and imminent Dangers which Our Kingdoms, and the true Protestant Religion, Established among Us, are in this present Juncture threatned with, without a Religious Observance of God's Holy Laws: To the Intent therefore that Religion, Piety, and good Manners may (according to Our most hearty Desire) flourish and increase under Our Administration and Government, We have thought fit (by the Advice of Our Privy Council) to issue this Our Royal Proclamation, and do hereby declare Our Royal Purpose and Resolution to discountenance and punish all manner of *Vice, Prophaneness, and Immorality*, in all Persons of whatsoever Degree or Quality, within this Our Realm, and particularly in such as are employed near Our Royal Person; and that for the greater Encouragement of Religion and Morality, We will, upon all Occasions, distinguish Persons of Piety and Virtue, by Marks of Our Royal Favour. And we do expect and require, that all Persons of Honour, or in Place of Authority, will give good Example by their own Virtue and Piety, and to their utmost, contribute to the discountenancing Persons of dissolute and debauched Lives, that they being by that means reduced to Shame and Contempt, for their loose and evil Actions and Behaviour, may be thereby also enforced the sooner to reform their ill Habits and Practices, and that the visible Displeasure of good Men towards them, may (as far as it is possible) supply what the Laws (probably) cannot altogether prevent. And We do hereby strictly enjoin and prohibit all Our Loving Subjects, of what Degree or Quality soever,

A Proclamation.

ever, from Playing on the *Lord's-Day* at *Dice, Cards*, or any other Game whatsoever, either in Publick or Private Houses, or other Place or Places whatsoever; and do hereby require and command them, and every of them, decently and reverently to attend the Worship of God on every *Lord's-Day*, on Pain of Our highest Displeasure, and of being proceeded against with the utmost Rigour that may be by Law. And for the more effectual Reforming of all such Persons, who, by reason of their dissolute Lives and Conversations, are a Scandal to Our Kingdom, Our further Pleasure is, and We do hereby strictly Charge and Command all Our Judges, Mayors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace, and all other Our Officers and Ministers, both Ecclesiastical and Civil, and all other Our Subjects whom it may concern, to be very vigilant and strict in the Discovery, and the effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be guilty of excessive *Drinking, Blasphemy, Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Lewdness, Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, or other Dissolute, Immoral or Disorderly Practices; and that they take care also effectually to suppress all Bawdy-Houses, Publick Gaming Houses and Places, and other Disorderly Houses, and to put in Execution the Statute made in the Ninth and Twentieth Year of the Reign of Our late Royal Uncle King *Charles the Second*, Intituled *An Act for the better Observation of the Lord's-Day, commonly called Sunday*; and also an Act of Parliament made in the Ninth Year of the Reign of Our late dear Brother King *William the Third*, Intituled, *An Act for the more effectual Suppressing of Blasphemy and Prophaneness*; and all other Laws now in Force for the Punishing and Suppressing any of the Vices aforesaid; and also to suppress and prevent all Gaming whatsoever in Publick or Private Houses on the *Lord's-Day*; and likewise that they take effectual care to prevent all Persons keeping Taverns, Chocolate-Houses, Coffee-Houses, or other Publick Houses whatsoever, from selling Wine, Chocolate, Coffee, Ale, Beer, or other Liquors, or Receiving or Permitting Guests to be or remain in such their Houses on the *Lord's-Day*, (except in case of Necessity and Charity) as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon Pain of Our highest Displeasure. And for the more effectual proceeding herein, We do hereby direct and command all Our Judges of Assize, and Justices

By the QUEEN, &c.

Justices of the Peace, to give strict Charges at their respective Assizes and Sessions, for the due Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons that shall presume to offend in any the kinds aforesaid, and also of all Persons that, contrary to their Duty, shall be remiss or negligent in putting the said Laws in Execution; and that they do at their respective Assizes and Quarter-Sessions of the Peace, cause this Our *Proclamation* to be publickly read in open Court, immediately before the Charge is given. And We do hereby further charge and command every Minister in his respective Parish-Church or Chappel, to read or cause to be read this Our *Proclamation*, at least *Four* times in every Year, immediately after Divine Service, and to incite and stir up their respective Auditories to the Practice of Piety and Virtue, and avoiding of all Immorality and Prophaneness. And to the end that all Vice and Debauchery may be prevented, and Religion and Virtue practised by all Officers, private-Soldiers, Mariners, and others, who are employed in Our Service, by Sea or Land, We do hereby strictly charge and command all our Commanders and Officers whatsoever, that they do take care to avoid all Prophaneness, Debauchery, and other Immoralities; and that by their own good and virtuous Lives and Conversations, they do set good Examples to all such as are under their Care and Authority, and likewise take care of and inspect the Behaviour of all such as are under them, and to punish all those who shall be guilty of any the Offences aforesaid, as they will be answerable for the ill consequences of their Neglect herein.

Given at Our Court at St. James's the Five and Twentieth Day of February, 1702. In the First Year of Our Reign.

G O D Save the Q U E E N.

(I)

AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
PROGRESS
OF THE

Reformation of Manners, &c.

SIR,

I Suppose that you have heard of the Attempts that have been made for the Promoting of a Reformation of Manners, by the Execution of the Penal-Laws against Prophaneness and Debauchery, begun by some few Persons of the Church of England, and most of them private Men: That these Endeavours have had a very great Success, (particularly for the Suppressing of Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Drunkenness, and Prophanation of the Lord's-Day, and the giving a Check to the

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Open Lewdness that was acted in many of our Streets,) and have been publickly and solemnly Approved by a considerable Number of the *Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Honourable Judges* of the Kingdoms of *England and Ireland*; and have been countenanced occasionally, and in another manner, by most of the other of our Right Reverend Bishops, in their *Circular Letters*, printed 1699. (of which I shall take some further Notice). But you may not be acquainted, that his late Majesty having this Affair laid before him by one of his chief Ministers of State, promised the *Societies* not only his Protection, but Countenance: And that our present Illustrious Queen, since the issuing out of Her *Proclamation* against *Vice and Profaneness*, hath been graciously pleased to signify her Approbation of this Work: That these Endeavours are carrying on in most Parts of this Kingdom, and in many of those of *Ireland*, as I could enumerate to you if 'twas necessary; and have been applauded and recommended in a publick manner, as fit to be imitated by other Christian States, by the Commissioners of several *French Churches*, who were appointed to take this Affair into their Consideration; and have been lately very solemnly
Approved

Approved by divers of the *Nobility*, and by the Commissioners of the General Assembly of the Church of *Scotland*, where this Work is now so far advanced, that besides the *Societies of Reformation* lately set up in other Parts of that Kingdom, there were, some Months since, *Thirteen* of these *Societies* in the City of *Edinburgh* alone; in which City, the Magistrates have, upon this Occasion, lately erected a new Court against *Immorality*; and that 'tis to be hoped, that with God's Blessing, a great part of the Christian World will be influenced hereby; the *Account* of these *Societies* being already Translated into the *French* and *High-Dutch* Languages, and is Translating into the *Latin*, for the propagating the same Glorious Design in other Nations; by which means a great part of the World will be soon acquainted with this Undertaking, and the Success of it, and, it may reasonably be expected, will be excited to an Imitation: And this may the rather be hop'd, since the restraining of Men from publick Vices, and open Violations of Religion, hath, I think, ever been thought the great Interest and Business of Government, is what the Laws of Civilized Nations, though they may be more or less severe in different Countries, provide against, *Papists* and *Pro-*

testants, Jews and Mahometans agree in ; and since moreover so many learned and pious Persons, in divers Parts of *Europe and America*, are already successfully engaged in Promoting of this Work by *Societies*, after the Example of *England*.

'Tis certain that a Reverend Divine, who hath been lately in our *Northern Plantations in America*, by the Encouragement of divers of our Bishops, for the propagating of Christianity there, ordered a whole Impression of the *Account of the Societies* to be printed off, and sent thither, for the Promoting a *Reformation*, by these Methods, in those Parts of the World. And this Reverend Person the last Month told me, that he thinks they have since made a more remarkable *Reformation* there than in either of Her Majesty's Kingdoms.

From *New-England* we are told, That great Care hath been there taken of late for the Punishment of *Vice and Prophaneness* by the Methods that are here used ; and a Gentleman of that Country, in his Letter bearing date *April the 10th, 1702.* informs us, that several Societies are formed at *Boston*, and he thinks that in a little time he shall acquaint us of others set up in other parts of that Country.

From the Island of *Jamaica*, Dr. *Tod*, Rector of *St. Thomas in the Vale*, tells us, That at a
general

general Meeting of the Clergy of that Island at St. *Jago de la Vaga*, Novemb. 27. 1700. by the Appointment of their Commissary, the Clergy, in conjunction with divers of the Gentlemen of that Countrey, had formed themselves into a Society for Reformation of Manners, and the Propagation of Christian Knowledge; and that the Governour of that Island had, under his Hand, signed his full Approbation of it and their Orders.

'Tis affirmed by a Person of Integrity, who is come over from *Flanders*, that they have very much suppressed the Disorderly Houses in *Brussels*, (the Popish Priests in that City having gone about to the publick Houses, exhorting them to leave off their Irregularities) as he assures me they have wholly done the Musick-Houses, which were generally Houses of ill Fame, in *Amsterdam* in *Holland*, from whence Monsieur *Banage* hath wrote to a Person in *Ireland*, to be informed what Progress Religion hath made in that Kingdom since Societies have been set up in it, being, it seems, desirous, as this Gentleman informs me, to engage himself in this Work in *Holland*.

By a Letter from *Switzerland*, dated in October 1700. we were acquainted, that an Account of our Societies was Translated into the High-Dutch
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Language; and that they were making some Progress in this Undertaking.

And from *Schafhausen* 'twas wrote, *Jan. 12. 1700.* That they rejoiced to hear of our Zeal in *England* from an *Account* of our *Societies*, which was there *Translated*; and that they had *Examples* of the same sort of *Societies*.

From *Germany* we have the following *Account* from *Dr. Frank*, *Divinity-Professor* in the *City of Hall* in *Saxony*, *Jan. 21. 1700.* who writes thus to some *Persons* in this *Place*: *The Eminent Success of your Undertakings* hath been made known in *Germany* by the *Reverend Dr. Jablonski*, *Chaplain* to the newly *Crown'd King of Prussia*, who hath *Translated* the *Account* of the *Societies* out of the *English* into the *German Language*. Nor hath this *Gentleman's Labours* in it proved *unsuccessful*: For besides the *Good* it hath done to the *Souls* of many particular *Persons*, who have been awakened thereby to a greater *Concern* for their *Spiritual Edification*, it hath had a particular good *Effect* at *Norenb'rg*, in that it hath mightily put forward and encouraged a *Society*, consisting of a great *Number* of *Citizens*, who had some time before began to meet at each others *Houses* upon a *Religious Account*, and from a sincere *Desire* of the *Truth*, as a very worthy *Person* hath, by the *Request* of them all, acquainted me, &c.

From

From *Rotterdam* the Famous Monsieur *Jurien*, hearing of these Societies, takes Notice, in a transporting manner, in a Letter to a Divine in *London*, that amidst the many Societies that were in the World about the Concerns of *Gold* and *Silver*, and for bringing the Wealth of the *Indies* into other Countries, he had at last heard a most reviving Account of pious Persons united in very successful Methods for the Extirpation of *Vice* and *Prophaneness*, and the bringing down of the *Riches of Heaven*; for which he praises God, and conceives great hopes from hence, that those happy Days may ensue to the Christian World which holy Souls so ardently desire and long for.

Monsieur *Ostervall* tells us, in a Letter dated *April* the 6th, 1701. from the Principality of *New-Castle*, That he had printed off there an Account of our Societies; and that since that was done, the pious Designs formed in *England* were there approved, &c. And *April* the 11th, 1701. he again says, That their Consistory being last Week assembled, resolved to buy up some Hundreds of the printed Copies of the *Account of the Societies*; and that they were sent to all the Consistories of that State, in order to dispose them to a Reformation of Manners, and to the setting up of
Schools;

Schools ; and that the Magistrates of *New-Castle* were address'd to by them for *Orders* and *Laws* against *Vice* and *Immorality*, which they had already obtained.

A Gentleman at *St. Galle*, in his Letter bearing date the 19th of *May*, 1701. writes to his Friend in *England*, That the *setting up of Societies* was recommended to a large Synod of Divines, at their late Meeting at *Zurich*, as the best Expedient for the Engaging Men to a religious Course of Life : That the *Account* of our *Religious Societies*, which was translated and printed at *Zurich*, was much enquired after : That *Orders* had been given from other *Protestant Cantons*, for the buying up some Numbers of them : That *Monsieur Scherer* had put into the *German Language* the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*, which was there in the Press, and he hoped would be printed off in a few days ; that 'twas intended to be dedicated to the States, and that Care was taken to make it known all over *Germany*.

Monsieur de Moos writes from *Malans*, in the Country of the *Grisons*, *Septemb. 22. 1701*. That at an Assembly of Divines that met at *Jais* in that Country the 2^d. of that Month, a very advantageous Account of our Designs of *Reformation*,

ation had been given them; that they would be laid before their Synod when they met; and that they designed to appoint a Person of Learning and Piety to begin and continue a Correspondence with one of our Societies in England.

And from the same Country, the celebrated Lady Madam *Hortensia de Salis*, whom you find honourably mentioned in the Bishop of *Salisbury's* printed *Letters* concerning *Switzerland*, in her Letter dated at *Cleft* the 10th of *March*, 1702. thus writes. I cannot sufficiently declare how great a Veneration is had for the Church of England, the King, and the Illustrious Society, in this Country, by all, in particular by the Clergy. They are every where prayed for, and remembred, as in our Hearts, so in all our Pulpits also. I trust in God (says she) that as He had always his *Moseses*, *Lotts*, and *Samuels*, that with-held his Wrath, &c. So he will now, in our Days, raise up many sincere Christians, who, by the Example of the Church of England, and of the Illustrious Society, will be encouraged to promote the Good, and punish the Bad, according to the Laws and Customs of every Country.

An Envoy Extraordinary from one of the greatest Princes of Europe to the *Swiss Cantons*,

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writes

writes in these Terms to an *English Gentleman*, in a Letter dated at *Bern*, Septemb. 10. 1701. I have discours'd with the principal *Persons* of this Church and State, and all of them bless God for the Success wherewith he has crowned the Zeal of your Holy and Religious Society, and are all of them inclin'd to enter into a Correspondence, &c.

A Person of great Reputation in *Switzerland* acquaints us, Septemb. 18. 1701. That *Monfieur Anfillon*, who hath a Commission to the Protestant Cantons from the King of *Denmark*, hath by Letters to his Correspondents recommended this Work at *Berlin*, and that a Proposal was there made for Translating the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners* into the *Danish* and *Sweedish* Languages; and that a Design was there laid of setting up and carrying on of Societies in *Denmark* and *Sweedon* by means of these Translations. He goes on thus in the same Letter: The Societies in *England* are in such Esteem in those Parts, that on the Sixth of *November* 1701. their general appointed Fast-day, they publickly prayed for the Preservation of them in all the Protestant Churches in that Country. I hope there is no *Englishman* that bath the least Sparks of Love to his Native Country, but will have in Honour these Incomparable Societies: If there are any People so
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impudent, as to speak disrespectfully of them, let them look to it, that it doth not one time or other fare with them, as now goes with (an Adversary of the Societies, he means) at Zurich, who, I am told, is so ashamed of his having opposed us, since all honest Men are on our side, that he is resolved to leave his Native Country, and go with his Family into some Foreign Parts. These unparallel'd Societies in England are not only to be regarded for the Honour they bring to their most happy Nation, but far more for the unspeakable Good that they cause to the Church of Christ both at Home and Abroad, and annuntiate a more illustrious State of the Church of God that is expected by the Conversion of Jews and Gentiles. These are his words, and he adds further these following: Thus, dear Sir, we now find that all the Helvetick and Rhetick Churches are entirely disposed to propagate Christian Knowledge, punish Vice, and promote true Piety, as the honourable Society invite them to.

And lastly, Monsieur Brink, Chaplain to the King of Denmark, hath wrote March 2. 1701. to a Reverend Divine in this Kingdom, to send him the Books relating to Reformation here, in order to his setting forward the same Design in that Kingdom; whose Endeavours therein, we have reason given us to hope, are by this time

very advantagiously assisted by several publick Ministers at that Court: And we understand, that Care hath been taken for the transmitting into *Sweeden* all the Books of Reformation, for the Promoting of the Design of them likewise in that Country.

I could have mentioned another Kingdom wherein our Endeavours of *Reformation of Manners* seem to have had a much greater Influence; But this I forbear upon some Considerations at present; and the rather, since the Particulars I have given you are, I conceive, not only sufficient to convince you fully, that the Success of our Methods of Reformation here, have given Occasion to Persons of the Nations beforementioned, to whom an Account of our Proceedings herein have reached, to set about the same Work; and that it will influence more of those Nations that are remote when it is known to them, by the Translations of the *Account of the Societies* into the more general Languages, that are already perfected, or are, we hear, carrying on; but may moreover give you occasion to think, that the Providence of Almighty God hath in a particular manner favoured this Design, especially when you consider, how, and by what means it was begun, and hath been
carried

carried on, and that by his Blessing it will prevail over all Opposition from either its publick or private Enemies.

And now, Sir, give me leave to say, Can it become any that would be reckoned Christians, that have this great Affair laid before them, to be unconcerned whether these Attempts for the beating down of *Prophaneness* and *Vice*, which have so spread in the World, be carried on not only in these Three Kingdoms, and in our Neighbouring Nations, but through the Christian World; whether the Cause of Religion or the Devil's Interest prevails, to stand Neuter at a time when their Fellow-Christians are successfully engaged in the Defence of our Religion against its Enemies, in their bold Attacques upon it; and frequently with the Hazard of their Lives, as lately at *May-Fair*, where some brave Souls were wounded, and one * Constable was barbarously Murder'd, in the Sight of the Sun, and almost in the Face of the Court, by a Company of Soldiers, who, to the Number of above Thirty, as is deposed upon Oath, fell upon the Civil Officers, and their Assistants, with their Swords in their Hands, and Oaths and Execrations in their Mouths, without any Provocation, whilst the Constables, with the good Men that assist-

* See the Sermon preached by the Reverend Dr. Woodward at the Funeral of Mr. John Cooper, the Constable who was Murder'd at May-Fair.

ed them, were endeavouring to prevent the abominable Disorders that were there committed, in Obedience to the Commands of Her Majesty, and by immediate Direction from the Justices of the Peace of that County.

But, Sir, to speak with a little more freedom to you, Can you think it either justifiable or honourable for one under your Character to satisfy your self with talking gravely and judiciously against the Impieties of the Age, with speaking kindly of those that are concerned in the Suppressing of them; or even with acting so faintly in this matter, as to discourage any that may be concerned with you in it from the Prosecution of it; and to speak plainly, to contribute, by your Neutrality or Lukewarmness, to the giving of Boldness and Strength to the Opposers of this Undertaking, and in consequence, I doubt, to the Shedding of the Blood, and to the outward Ruine of the best Subjects to the present Government, if not some of the best Christians in the Nation, who, I am told, are so far from being discouraged (the heartiest of them I mean) by the Opposition and Sufferings they meet with from the Enemies of Reformation, who, with our Neuters, have a fresh Occasion given them to consider, of whom the
Blood

Blood that is already shed, and that which will be spilt in the Work of Reformation, will be required, that they seem to be animated thereby with greater Zeal for their God, as the Martyrs of old were by the Death of their Fellow-Christians. No, surely this is a time for all that carry the Face of Christians, to exert the utmost of their Interest and Authority, to join their Heads, Hearts, Hands, and Purses, in this Noble Undertaking.

This therefore is what I most earnestly recommend to you, that you would be of the happy Number of those that give their hearty and zealous Assistance in this pious Enterprize, wherein the Honour of Almighty God and the Good of the World seem to be so much concerned, and thereby become a Benefactor to Mankind. And that you may not be discouraged from Engaging in it for want of Direction how to promote it, I have herewith sent you such Materials as may enable you to set about it with great Advantage after you have humbly supplicated the Divine Direction and Aid in so weighty an Affair; and which will, I conceive, leave you the more without Excuse if you do not in some measure what you shall conclude, upon your most solemn Deliberation upon this Proposal it behoves you to do therein.

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You have first of all, in the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland*, which I have sent you, a Narrative of the *Beginning and Success of the Endeavours of Reformation*, and a general Scheme of the *Undertaking*, with a *Perfwasive to Men of all Ranks and Denominations*; and a particular Address to *Ministers and Magistrates*, who have their special Obligations laid before them, to be zealous in it: To which are added, His Majesty's *Proclamation against Prophaneness and Vice*, and the *Act of Parliament against prophane Swearing and Cursing*, which Ministers are to read Four times a Year in their Churches and Chappels; and an *Abstract of the Laws* which Magistrates are to execute for the Suppressing of *Prophaneness and Debauchery*, &c. And in the little Book, call'd, *A Help to Reformation*, besides the *Proclamation, Act of Parliament, and Abstract* beforementioned, (which are printed for the Use of Magistrates and Ministers) Magistrates have *Forms of Warrants*, and of a *Register* in those Cases; Inferior Officers have *Instructions* laid before them for their Executing of their Office with the greatest Advantage; and private Persons have *Prudential Rules* for the giving of *Informations*, and the raising of *Societies*; which Societies, I must observe to you, have been, from the beginning of

of this Undertaking, and will still be, the great Engines for the carrying of it on: And that therefore the most considerable Service that can generally be done in it, will be, in the *Forming of Societies*: Insomuch, that it will seldom fail to go on slowly, and with Obstruction, in that Place where there is not a Society of this kind; but much more easily, steadily and successfully, in any Town or Village where there is one in or near it, tho' it consists but of a few Persons. I have likewise, Sir, sent you some *Blank Warrants* for particular Offences, which those that give Informations are to keep by them, and to fill them up when they have any Informations to give against any prophane and vicious Persons, with the Offenders Names, Offences, Places of Abode, &c. and to carry them thus filled up to the Magistrates; and being signed by them after their Informations are taken upon Oath, to send or carry them to the best disposed Constables to be executed, for the Ease of Magistrates and their Clerks, who, when they happen to be no hearty Friends to these Proceedings, will have the less Occasion to be prejudiced against them, and consequently, will the less discourage them when they have not the Trouble of so much as writing, filling up, or sending out of a Warrant.

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You have moreover sent you some *Lists* of the Names of a vast Number of *Lewd* and *Disorderly* Persons, besides *Common Swearers*, *Drun-kards*, &c. who, by the Diligence chiefly of only one Society of Persons, who apply themselves principally to the Suppressing of *Lewd* and *Infamous Houses*, have been brought to Punish-ment in or near the City of *London*. By which you may be more sensible, what a horrid *Nur-sery* of *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, what a Sink of *Uncleanness*, this City would have been, and what ground we have to believe, that *Irreligion* would have more and more prevail'd in this Nation, had it not been for the Endeavours of the Societies; and that you may be more fully convinc'd with what more Advantage Men proceed in Societies, than they can possibly do alone; tho' I am apt to think, that the *Casuists* will not tell you, that Men are not to act singly at such a Juncture as this for the Sup-pressing the publick Dishonour of the *Name*, the *Day*, and the *Laws* of *GOD*, when they find none to unite with; that they are not to en-deavour to do that Good that is in their Power to do, because they can't do as much Good as they would. I must add, that you may likewise very much promote this Work, by Influencing
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of Magistrates to do their Duty vigorously herein ; by Furthering in as many Places as you can the Choice of good *Officers* in Corporations, who will have a sense of the Obligations that their Oath and Office lay them under, to endeavour to be serviceable in this Matter ; and by letting Constables know how great a Power they have for the Suppressing all publick Disorders of this kind : And by Endeavouring, by your self and Friends, to incline them to exert their Power in going about into Streets, Markets, and other publick Places, on Week-Days, for the taking up of *Drunkards*, *Swearers*, &c. and carrying of them before Magistrates ; and on the Lords-Day, by inspecting into *publick-Houses*, for the Preventing of *Tipling* ; and by taking up of *Drovers*, *Carriers*, &c. that travel on that Day, and such as are found at *unlawful Sports* and *Pastimes*, as they are directed in the *Help to Reformation*. One or two Constables that shall thus Exercise their Office, will be able very much, if not wholly, to prevent all Disorders of this kind in most Cities and Corporations of the Nation. I am assured, that in divers Corporations of this Kingdom, as well as in *Ireland*, religious Men have voluntarily taken the Constable's Office upon them, for the more effectual carrying on

of this Design. Herein then your Endeavours are like to be more serviceable than in any other thing that I can easily instance, unless it be in the Promoting of the * giving of Informations against Offenders, or in the Raising of Societies; by which Societies many proper Measures will be thought of, and this Undertaking be put upon the most lasting Foundation. And these are the

* See the Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland, p. 58, 59, 60, &c.

Methods which we find recommended by the Lord Arch-Bishop of CANTERBURY, in his Circular Letter dated April 4. 1699. in which the Bishops of that Province in their joint Letter concurred. * The remarkable words of which

* The Arch-Bishop of Canterbury's Circular Letter to the Bishops of his Diocess, p. 4, 6.

Letter are these: " Every pious Person of the Laity should, if need be, be put in Mind, that he ought to think himself obliged to use his best Endeavours to have such Offenders punish'd by the Civil Magistrates as can be no otherwise amended; and that when he hears his Neighbour Swear, or Blaspheme the Name of GOD, or sees him offend in Drunkenness, or Profanation of the Lords-Day, he ought to give the Magistrate notice of it. In such a Case to be call'd an Informer, will be so far from making any Man odious, in the Judgment of sober Persons, that it will tend to his Honour, when he makes it appear, by his unblameable Beha-

" viour,

“viour, and the Care that he takes of himself
 “and his Family, that he doth it purely for the
 “Glory of God, and the Good of his Brethren.
 “Such well disposed Persons as are resolved upon
 “this, should be encouraged to meet as often
 “as they can, to consult how they may most dis-
 “cretely and effectually manage it in the Places
 “where they live.

Here then Ministers are obliged by their
 Bishops to put the Laity in Mind of giving of
 Informations to Magistrates against Prophaneness
 and Vice, as a Matter of Duty, and an honou-
 rable thing; and to encourage them to meet
 frequently together; and to consult how they
 may discretely and effectually manage it in the
 Places where they live. And in the fourth
 Page of this *Letter*, the Clergy are directed to
 invite the Church-Wardens of their several Pa-
 rishes, and other pious Persons among the Laity,
 to join with them in the Execution of the most
 probable Methods that can be suggested for the
 carrying on a Reformation of Manners: And
 we are told, that from such Meetings we may
 expect happy Effects. And in the same Page
 'tis observed, that from such Meetings happy
 Advances have been already made towards a
Reformation of Manners, which is express'd in these
 Terms ;

London
and West-
minster.

Terms; *From the visible Success of that Noble Zeal wherewith so many about the great * Cities in my Neighbourhood do promote true Piety, and a Reformation of Manners.*

Now then you have the declared Judgment before you of most of our Learned Prelates concerning our giving of Informations, and our Associating for the consulting upon the most probable Methods of *Reformation*, and their Judgment with the beforementioned Approbation of Societies, (published in the *Account of the Societies for Reformation of Manners*) of so many Persons celebrated for Wisdom, and in high Stations in the Church and State, who have herein not only declared their Opinion, “ that
“ the Design of putting the Penal-Laws in Execution, for the Suppressing of *Prophaneness* and
“ *Debauchery*, is for the Honour of Almighty
“ God, and tends to the Advancement of Piety and
“ Virtue, and the publick Good both of Church
“ and State, and cannot fail of being approved
“ by all good Men: But that the Method likewise (as the carrying of it on by *Societies*) is
“ most proper, and, with the Blessing of God attending it, is most likely to prove effectual for the Promoting a *Reformation of Manners*:
These things, I say, will afford you an Argument

gument to stop the Mouths of such Persons as either from unhappy Principles, or their Unwillingness to be reform'd themselves, may be endeavouring to raise Objections against the giving of Informations, and the Meetings of pious Persons, to concert the most advisable Methods of Suppressing *Prophaneness* and *Vice*, which we call in other terms, *Societies for Reformation of Manners*.

But if these things will not silence them, you may then ask them, whether they can in truth think it does become those that pretend to have a Love for God and their Neighbour, contentedly to hear, without taking any Notice of it, such a Multitude of those that call themselves Christians using, without Fear or Shame, the most horrid *Oaths* and *Execrations* in their ordinary Conversation, even imprecating Damnation on themselves and others, as an Ornament of Speech; to see *Drunkenness* pass among them for good Humour, and *Lewdness* for good Breeding; *Publick-Houses* to become Stews for the Entertainment of Mens Lusts in all Parts of the Nation; and Herds of *Lewd Women* to be continually soliciting of Men to *Lewdness* in the open Streets; the *Lords-day* prophaned in the most impudent manner, by Mens following of their Trades or
ordinary

ordinary Callings, even keeping open Markets on it, or spending it in Gaming, Tipling, and Excess: In short, to see their God publicly dishonoured and blasphemed, and his Laws trampled on; their Religion professedly attacqued, and Multitudes of Souls thus to go on in a full Carrier to destruction, and their Country thereby to be in manifest Danger of being ruined, when 'tis so much in their Power, in this happy Juncture more-especially, to prevent these Enormities, which are attended with such dreadful Consequences, by their joining their Assistance with their Fellow-Christians in Furthering the Execution of the known Laws of the Land against them, (which so many Thousand Magistrates and inferior Officers have Oaths and Trusts upon them to see executed, how shamefully soever the generality of them have neglected it;) and, on the other side, whether it is not a most desirable thing, and of mighty Advantage to Religion, that the greatest Temptations to the Sins to which Men are either accustomed, or have a natural Propensity to, should be taken as much as may be out of their way, and the Avenues to them stopped, that we might converse with our Neighbours, or at least go abroad in the World, without the greatest Danger

Danger of Wounding our Consciences, or of being laught at and scorned for behaving our selves as becomes Christians ; to have Religion delivered from the Contempt that prophane and vicious Men have so much brought upon it by their Impunity, and publick Countenance, in their open and insolent Violations of it; to have their wicked Combinations broke, and frequent and publick Examples of Prophane-ness and Vice taken out of publick View, National Sins (that bring National Judgments, to be) suppress'd, Virtue appear honourable and desirable, Vice infamous and detestable ; and lastly, Men brought to a Regard to Sacred things, to Consideration, and a serious Enquiry into the Nature of Religion, and this by the Execution of the Penal-Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, in Conjunction with all the other pious and proper Methods, as of Instruction, Admonition, Reproof, and the giving away of Books of Religion, &c. that are taken by the *Societies* for this end. When they have allowed these things to be so highly desirable and necessary, as that unless they are in some measure effected, or at least some other extraordinary Methods are set on foot then are at present pursued, there appears no probability that the Tide of Wick-
E edness

edness will be stopped, and Religion flourish among us; you may then ask them further, whether these things are not what the *Societies for Reformation* do not only directly pursue, but have so much already promoted; that how bad soever our State is with respect to these Matters, yet that 'tis undoubtedly far better, generally speaking, then 'twas when these Endeavours begun; at which time we were under such unhappy Circumstances, (which I forbear to mention) that if this Undertaking had not been set on foot, we were, I conceive, likely to have been one of the most debauched Nations in Principles and Practice perhaps in the Christian World. If they will deny these things, which they will not without great Immodesty; you may then desire them honestly to give you their Reasons for their contrary Sentiments, rather than secretly to raise Prejudices against this Design; and that they would also at the same time propose, as is, I think, reasonable they should do, other more Christian and practicable Methods for the Retrieving of Virtue and Religion among us; which, as they are professed Christians, they will allow to be necessary to be endeavoured in one way or other. And if they can prove to you, which they can never do, in Contradiction, I conceive, to Holy Writ, and the

the general consent of Mankind to the contrary, that our joining our Endeavours, in a regular way, for the Suppressing of *Prophaneness* and *Vice*, by the Execution of Humane Laws, is not a Christian Undertaking, it will then perhaps appear to you more reasonable and honourable for them either secretly to undermine, or publicly to oppose it, after it hath moreover been declared, by so many Persons in publick Authority, to be for the publick Good both of *Church* and *State*, and the most likely way of promoting a *National Reformation*, and hath evidently proved so successful for this end. But till this is done, they must give us leave to think, that such Persons as out of a love to God and Man are employed in endeavouring, by legal and proper Methods, the preventing the Destruction of so great a Number of Souls in our own and other Kingdoms, and of National Judgments, are engaged in a blessed Work; from which 'tis to be hoped, that neither their unaccountable Prejudices and Reproaches, nor the Difficulties and Sufferings which are brought upon them by their means, from profligate Persons, in their discharging their Duty therein, will discourage or deter them; and that 'tis exceedingly much for the Honour of this Undertaking, that after

so many Thousand Persons have been punished for their wicked Practices, and a far greater Number must in all reason be supposed to have been restrained, in some measure at least, from their sinful Indulgencies, within the *Ten Years* that this Design hath been pursued, no Man, that I hear of, since the first Opposition to this Enterprize in its Infancy, hath ventured his Reputation so far, as to publish with a Name any Objections against it; to tell us any ill Consequences that it hath produced to either *Church* or *State*; to charge any Vices on those that have been employed in the Forming and Carrying of it on, or Irregularities in their Conduct of this Undertaking, tho' in all this time the Enemies of *Reformation* have surely had a sufficient Opportunity to consider of these Matters; so that this Design stands at this time so fair in all Respects with the World, that even since the *publick Approbation of the Societies of Reformation* by many of our Bishops, in the printed *Account* of them 1698, and of almost all the rest of them in their *Pastoral Letters* beforementioned, about the same time, one of that Right Reverend Body, the *Lord Bishop of *Gloucester*, in his printed Sermon, preached to these *Societies*, 1699. tells them, " That the Service they are

* The Lord
Bishop of
Gloucester's
Sermon to
the Societies
for Reformation,
preach'd
June 26.
1699. p. 20,
30, 36.

“ employed in is incomparably the most noble
 “ and highly Praise-worthy that it could be possi-
 “ ble for them to be engaged in. And as for
 “ Jealousies of ill Consequences of their *Societies*,
 “ he says, that he never heard one wise Word
 “ said on that Topick, and perswaded himself he
 “ never should: And then professes the greatest
 “ hope he had that God had still Mercy in store
 “ for us, is from the Excellent Spirit with which
 “ he hath endued so great a Number of good
 “ Christians among us, for the running down
 “ of Wickedness by the most Justifiable means,
 “ in their respective Stations; and the Encou-
 “ ragement that His Majesty hath given to
 “ them, &c.

* The Lord Bishop of *Ely*, in his Ser-
 mon preach'd on the same solemn Occasion,
 not only highly commended and encour-
 aged the Zeal of those that are engaged in
Societies, for the carrying on of a *Reformation*,
 but declared, “ That he never heard that any of
 “ the Persons that were concerned in the Work
 “ of *Reformation* were chargeable with any of
 “ the Vices that they were concerned in Sup-
 “ pressing; and that they were Men of Virtue,
 “ &c. and fit Persons to be employed in this
 “ glorious Undertaking.

* The Lord
 Bishop of
 Ely's Ser-
 mon to the
Societies for
Reformation
 preach'd
 Decem. 30.
 17^{co}.

The

* The Lord
Bishop of
Salisbury's
Sermon to
the Societies
for Reformation,
preach'd
March 25.
1700. p.
26, 27, 28.

* The Lord Bishop of Salisbury, in his Sermon preached March 1700. hath these Expressions, speaking of the *Endeavours* of the Societies:
 “ It gives us some small beginnings of Hope,
 “ that in and about this great City, there has
 “ been, for some Years, a Spirit stirring, that
 “ looks like a reviving, as if our dry Bones
 “ could live again: Blessed be God for this
 “ door of Hope which he is thus opening;
 “ and blessed be they of the Lord who have
 “ offered themselves so willingly before Him,
 “ and before all the People; their Names shall
 “ be of a good Savour in the present, and in
 “ the succeeding Generations, who have begun
 “ to set forward so Noble a Design, to put a
 “ stop to so many vicious Practices, and to
 “ raise a Spirit of true Piety among us. These
 “ are the SALT of the Earth, the PILLARS
 “ of it, and the LIGHT of the World.

* The Lord
Bishop of
Chester's
Sermon to
the Societies
for Reformation,
preach'd
March 31.
1701.

* The Lord Bishop of Chester, in his Sermon preach'd to the Societies March 30. 1701. applied himself in these Terms to the Persons concerned in the *Reformation of Manners*: “ You
 “ who are concerned in Societies, on purpose
 “ for the Promoting this great and noble Design, have no doubt met with great Opposition, especially when you first entered up-
 “ on

“ on it; but by how much the greater that
 “ was, by so much the greater will your Reward
 “ be. The most difficult part of your Work
 “ is already over, and your Progress for the fu-
 “ ture will be daily more easie. You have the
 “ Hearts and Prayers of all good Men with you;
 “ yea, the Almighty Lord and Governour of the
 “ World is on your side. Since it is his Cause
 “ you have undertaken you need not fear, tho’
 “ all the Powers of Earth and Hell should be
 “ mustered up against you. Go on therefore
 “ couragiously in the Work you have so happily
 “ begun, and in which you have hitherto met
 “ with Success beyond your Hopes; many even
 “ of the most remote Parts of the Nation have
 “ already followed you, and the rest, when
 “ they shall come to be better acquainted with
 “ it, may be influenced by your Example, till
 “ by degrees such a General Reformation may
 “ ensue, as may make this a happy Nation, and
 “ may render your Names for ever Blessed who
 “ have been the Chief Instruments of it.

* The Reverend Dr. Kennett, in his Sermon
 preach’d to the Societies last Decemb. 1701. says
 thus. “ Firm Alliances and strong Confederacy
 “ were needful to pull down the affected uni-
 “ versal Empire of Sin and Wickedness. Nothing
 but

* The Reve-
 rend Dr.
 Kennett’s
 Sermon to
 the Societies
 for Refor-
 mation,
 preach’d
 Decem. 11.
 1701.

“ but the mutual Treaties and concerted Leagues
 “ of well disposed Christians could have humbled
 “ *that Prince of Darkneſs*. A Mercy of God that
 “ Men of Honour and Conſcience fell into a
 “ happy Underſtanding, and joined Hearts and
 “ Hands to reduce the exorbitant Power of
 “ Satan, and to reſtore the only Peace and
 “ Safety of Mankind.

“ It was time, *my Brethren*, to unite for the
 “ Preſervation of Virtue and Religion, when
 “ Atheiſts and Libertines had their open Affig-
 “ nations, and publick Meetings: When they
 “ divided themſelves into daring Clubs, and
 “ deſperate Cabals. *My Brethren*, Divine Wiſ-
 “ dom did direct you. Your voluntary So-
 “ cieties to ſuppreſs Vice and Immorality raiſe
 “ not the Jealouſie of your Governours, they
 “ are wiſer and better; they only raiſe the En-
 “ vy of the Wicked, and the Fury of Hell.
 “ The Devils and their Earthly Fiends do know,
 “ that you have now an Army of Chriſtians to
 “ engage their Spiritual Powers: That you have
 “ now ſome for *Conſult*, ſome for *Action*; here
 “ to order, there to execute; ſome to help bear
 “ the *Expence*, and others the *Fatigue*; with all
 “ proſpect of Succeſs to your glorious Expe-
 “ dition.

“ Let

‘ Let their Characters (says he speaking of
 the *Reformers*) ‘ be better known: Let Guilt
 ‘ and Envy search into them, they’ll find Men
 ‘ of Honour and Integrity; Men of Conscience
 ‘ and Devotion; Men of Zeal, and Discretion
 ‘ with it; Men of publick Spirit, that propose
 ‘ doing good, and *look up* only for the Reward
 ‘ of it.

‘ The Adversaries of God and Goodness can-
 ‘ not justly upbraid you, that you have made
 ‘ so little Progress in this honourable Work;
 ‘ when your want of greater Success has been
 ‘ owing to their Obstruction and Opposition;
 ‘ when they have put *Stumbling-blocks*, and even
 ‘ *Snares* in your way; when ye have been re-
 ‘ vil’d by many of the *Multitude*, and discoun-
 ‘ tenanc’d by some few of the *Magistrates*; when
 ‘ ye have endur’d all the kinds of the *Contra-*
 ‘ *dition of Sinners*; Frowns and Derisions,
 ‘ Threats and Reproaches, and the little Wit
 ‘ of Fools, *making a Mock at Sin*; when ye have
 ‘ met with Delays, and even Denials of Justice;
 ‘ when your plain *Informations* have been turn’d
 ‘ into vexatious *Suits*, and frivolous *Actions* have
 ‘ been brought against the doing of your *Duty*;
 ‘ when the Malice of the Devil, and the Mad-
 ‘ ness of the People, have done all that is pos-
 F sible

‘ fible to blaſt your Endeavours, and hinder
 ‘ Reformation. But indeed the *Wonder* is, that
 ‘ God ſhould bleſs ſo ſmall a Beginning with
 ‘ ſo great an Encrease of Proſperity and happy
 ‘ Effects.

‘ But it raiſe the Envy of the Wicked when
 ‘ I ſay, that the Fame of our *English Societies*,
 ‘ to ſuppreſs Vice and Prophaneneſs, has ſpread
 ‘ into many Lands. The ſeveral *Accounts of*
 ‘ *our Societies* have been Tranſlated into many
 ‘ Languages: The good Example has been
 ‘ follow’d, not only in His Maſteſty’s own King-
 ‘ doms and Dominions, but in ſome Foreign
 ‘ parts; from whence Letters have been often
 ‘ ſent hither from Men of the higheſt Cha-
 ‘ racter, to extol this publick Spirit of our Na-
 ‘ tion, and to pray for the Almighty’s Bleſ-
 ‘ ſing on it.

‘ Let us thank God that theſe Endeavours
 ‘ toward Righteouſneſs have ſo *exalted our Na-*
 ‘ *tion* abroad: And let us pray, that God would
 ‘ more and more bleſs thoſe Endeavours here
 ‘ at home. *God has bleſt ’em*, by moving the
 ‘ Hearts of our Governours to preſs and to pro-
 ‘ mote the Execution of our wholeſome Laws
 ‘ againſt all Immorality and Irreligion, by Coun-
 ‘ ſelling the great Council of this Nation to
 ‘ make

‘ make new *Acts* and *Provisions* for the more ef-
 ‘ fectual Suppressing several kinds of Prophane-
 ‘ ness; by influencing the Honourable House
 ‘ of Commons to offer their repeated *Addresses*
 ‘ to the King, for the vigorous Execution of
 ‘ such Laws; by directing his Majesty to issue
 ‘ out his Gracious and Pious *Proclamations* to
 ‘ that good effect; by disposing our Juries to
 ‘ many suitable *Presentments*; and by inciting
 ‘ our Justices and Gentry to many excellent
 ‘ *Orders of Sessions*, to give Life and new Spirit
 ‘ to those Laws.

‘ If it be still asked, where be the Instances
 ‘ or Examples of *Reformation*? who or what
 ‘ Sinners have been converted from the Error of
 ‘ their ways? I must answer, that they are Strangers
 ‘ to this Design, who do not know, there be a
 ‘ Multitude of such Examples. Within a few years,
 ‘ by the working of this *Publick Spirit*, a Multi-
 ‘ tude of Sinners have been reprov’d, and to ap-
 ‘ pearance, at least, have been *reformed*. By a
 ‘ moderate Calculation, no less than *Thirty Thou-*
 ‘ *sand* Persons have been convicted for *Prophane*
 ‘ *Cursing* and *Swearing*: Near the same Number
 ‘ of *Lewd* and *Disorderly Persons* have been brought
 ‘ to a merciful Punishment, and were thereby
 ‘ reclaim’d from their Vices, or at least restrain’d

' from the Publick Scandal of 'em. The Dis-
 ' orderly-Houses that have been suppress'd in and
 ' about this City, may be computed at about
 ' Eight Hundred. Above Ten Thousand Examples
 ' have been made of Suffering and Shame, for
 ' Prophanation of the Lord's-Day : And in a Word,
 ' to prevent the Raging of Sin, and to promote
 ' the Encrease of Piety and Virtue, above One
 ' Hundred Thousand Books of Religion, and
 ' Earnest Dissuasives from the Prevailing Vices of
 ' the Age, have been given away and dispersed
 ' through our Cities and Villages, and Fleets
 ' and Armies.

' If I am not credited in this Report of the
 ' good Effects of Reformation; I dare appeal to
 ' the Publick-Houses, to the Markets, to the Streets
 ' of this City. How are those Publick-Houses
 ' in great measure reduc'd to their Primitive In-
 ' stitution, a Sober and Honest Refreshment, at
 ' least to better Hours, and to a strict distinguish-
 ' ing between Ordinary and Sacred Days ? How
 ' are those Markets and Places of Resort, redeemed
 ' from the horrid Noise of Oaths and Curses ?
 ' How are those Streets cleansed from the impu-
 ' dent Women who walkt about soliciting for
 ' Lust and filthy Lucre ?

' All

' All the Inhabitants of this City, we praise God,
 ' can attest this Truth, that of late Years *Lewd-*
 ' *ness* and *Prophaneness* have visibly decreas'd;
 ' *Swearers* have been sensibly put to silence;
 ' Houses of Entertainment have been much re-
 ' gulated; *Sundays* and *Fast-Days* have been more
 ' decently observed; *Stews*, and the common
 ' Stages of Impurity, have been notably suppress'd;
 ' the Licentiousness of Publick *Actings* has been
 ' somewhat restrain'd, and Hopes arise of bring-
 ' ing more Modesty and Virtue upon the Stage,
 ' and that they shall no other way expose Vice,
 ' than to make it odious. In a Word, *Religion*
 ' has begun to look better, since the Laws better
 ' executed, have kept it more in countenance.

' I could mention many other good Effects,
 ' by the Blessing of God upon the late worthy
 ' Endeavours for the *Reformation of Manners*.
 ' But I conclude.

' Proceed ye in this way of Righteousness,
 ' and the *Lord God prosper you* in it. Be zealously
 ' affected alway in this good thing: and may ye live
 ' to see your noble Zeal in suppressing *Vice* and
 ' *Impiety* to be the Interest and the Honour of
 ' this City; to be the Security and the Glory of
 ' this Church and Nation, &c.

And

* The Lord
Bishop of
Oxford's
Sermon to
the Societies
for Reformation
of
Manners,
preach'd
at Bow-
Church
March 30.
1702.

And lastly, * the Lord Bishop of Oxford, in his Sermon preach'd to the Societies for Reformation of Manners last April 1702. hath these Expressions: 'Since the Design and Tendency of the Son of God's taking our Nature upon him, and of his whole Transaction in that Nature; was to destroy Sin, to extirpate Wickedness and Vice, and promote Purity and Holiness among Men, what an unspeakable Comfort and Encouragement must this Doctrine afford, to all those, that are seriously concern'd in that Glorious Attempt, of reforming a loose Age?

'What other Reflection can equally cheer and animate a good Man in any Undertaking, with this thought, that the Work which I am now engag'd in, is the very same Work which the Son of God came down from Heaven to set on foot; my Employment, the same with that, which took up his whole time here on Earth?

How is it possible for a Man, under such an Apprehension, to be in the least discourag'd by all the Obloquy and Reproach, with which he shall be loaded; by all the Difficulties he shall meet with, or Dangers he shall be expos'd to? Is it possible for him, to be ashamed out of, or perswaded that it is dishonourable, and below him,

' him, to be any way instrumental in carrying
 ' on that Work, which he is satisfied, the Son of
 ' God thought it not below him to undertake?
 ' Is it possible for him to be disheartned, or af-
 ' frighted, by any Hardships or Hazards, which
 ' he must encounter in it, when he is assured,
 ' that the Work he is engag'd in, is the Work of
 ' God, who is able to carry him through one, and
 ' protect him from the other, and make him
 ' more than Conqueror over both?

Suffer then the Word of Exhortation, and of
 ' Consolation too, ye brave and truly Heroick
 ' Souls, who have enter'd into a Holy Confederacy,
 ' not only against Flesh and Blood, but also, against
 ' Principality, against Powers, against the Rulers of
 ' the Darknes of this World, against Spiritual
 ' Wickedness in high Places.

'Tis certain, that he is a very foolish Warriour,
 ' who goeth to War without first sitting down, and
 ' computing both his own, and his Adversaries
 ' Forces; and seeing whether he has Strength
 ' enough, to meet and oppose him: your Ad-
 ' versaries, indeed, are numerous, and powerful,
 ' The Prince of the Power of the Air, with his
 ' Rulers and Companies, (which, according to
 ' the Notion of the Jews, fill the whole space
 ' between Earth and Heaven) and the Children of
 ' Disobe-

‘ *Disobedience upon Earth, in whom he worketh, all*
 ‘ *Evil Spirits, and all Wicked Men; and from*
 ‘ *these ye must expect the most vigorous and*
 ‘ *obstinate Opposition :*

But be not afraid of their Terrors, remember,
 ‘ *that the Battle is not yours, but God’s; that*
 ‘ *the Cause in which you are engag’d, is his, to*
 ‘ *whose absolute Dominion Heaven, and Earth,*
 ‘ *and Hell, Angels, and Men, and Devils,*
 ‘ *must submit, and whom no Council, or Power*
 ‘ *can oppose.*

The General, under whom you serve, whose
 ‘ *Quarrel you take up, is he, who has already*
 ‘ *spoil’d Principalities and Powers, and made a Show*
 ‘ *of them openly, triumphing over them in his Cross ;*
 ‘ *who has overcome the World; who has all Power in*
 ‘ *Heaven and Earth, and is able by his mighty Power*
 ‘ *to subdue all things to himself; and who will ne-*
 ‘ *ver desert those, that fight under his Banner,*
 ‘ *with Prudence and Conduct, Courage and Fi-*
 ‘ *delity : Go on therefore boldly, in the Strength*
 ‘ *of the Lord, and the Power of his Might, to beat*
 ‘ *down the strong holds of Sin, to destroy the Works*
 ‘ *of the Devil, and to recover those Poor Souls out of*
 ‘ *his Snare, who are taken Captive by him at his Will.*

‘ *If those generous, and publick Spirits are de-*
 ‘ *servedly honour’d and admir’d, who are instru-*
 ‘ *mental*

'mental in breaking the Power of Earthly
 'Tyrants, and vindicating the just Liberties of
 'Men, from their Oppressions, how much higher
 'must their Characters rise, who are Instruments
 'in the Hands of God, for opposing that uni-
 'versal Tyranny, which the Devil, the Prince
 'of the Air, would exercise over the Souls of
 'Men, for breaking the Fetters wherewith he
 'enslaves them, and bringing them into the Ser-
 'vice of God, which is perfect Freedom ?

'Those Fools, that *make a Mock at Sin*, and a
 'Jest of Religion ; those despicable Wretches,
 '*who serve the Devil and divers Lusts*, and are Vas-
 'sals to their own brutish Appetites and Affecti-
 'ons, may despise, and revile you, make you the
 'Subjects of their impotent Malice, and insipid
 'Raillery ; But so would they have dealt with
 'the Son of God, had they lived when he was
 'upon the Earth, and so did the Wicked of that
 'Age treat him, and for the same reason : and
 'surely, *when you consider him, that endur'd such con-*
 '*tradictions of Sinners against himself*, you will not,
 'for any Reproaches you shall suffer from such,
 'for his Sake and Service, *grow weary, and faint in*,
 '*your Minds*.

'You will go on with Alacrity, when you
 'are assured of the Countenance and Encourage-

'ment of your Governours, when your most
 'Gracious Queen, in the very beginning of Her
 'Reign, has publickly own'd the Cause in which
 'you are engag'd, and by Her Pious Proclamation
 'openly declar'd War against that Tyrant, whose
 'Kingdom you are labouring to pull down ;
 'and when you may, with the greatest confidence,
 'depend upon the Value and Esteem, the Love
 'and good Wishees, the fervent Prayers, and best
 'Assistance of all Wise and good Men.

'You will persevere to the end in this God-
 'like Employment, when it affords you the Glo-
 'rious Prospect of being found, when your Lord
 'shall call you hence, doing that, which he himself
 'was doing, when he was here.

'With what Extasies of Joy will one so
 'found be transported at the Approach of Death ?
 'when he can with Comfort look backwards
 'and say, *I have Fought the good Fight, I have*
 'finish'd my Master's Work, his Work properly,
 'as being not only that which *He gave me to do,*
 'but that which he himself was employed in ;
 'and when he can with assurance look forwards to
 'that Crown of Righteousness, which God the Righ-
 'teous Judge shall give him, in that Place, where
 'they that have turn'd many to Righteousness shall
 'shine as the Stars, for ever and ever.

It may not be an unnecessary Caution that I now give you, notwithstanding all the Advantages I have here laid before you for your engaging vigorously in this Noble Design, not to be easily discouraged by the small Number of your Friends, or others, that may heartily concur with you in it, upon its being recommended to them, at the first especially. The Number of zealous and prudent Christians are, I doubt, few in comparison with the Lukewarm and Prophane in most Places, Four or Five of these will make a good Beginning in any Place, tho' they should be of the Inferior Rank; of which sort of Men, I conceive, Societies may generally be more easily rais'd; not only because these are of the far greater Number, but because Men of Title and of great Estates too seldom apply themselves to Religious Undertakings, wherein much Trouble or Shame may be expected: Nor are you to be disheartned by the Backwardness of Magistrates, if it should fare so hard with you, as that you have but one Magistrate near you that hath a just Sence of his Duty in this respect, and that will readily receive Informations; and others, in defiance of all their Obligations, in Contempt of the repeated Commands of the Government, and in manifest Contradiction to

their printed Orders of Sessions, (wherein they formally invite good Christians to give Informations against the Breaches of the Laws, and promise to give them all due Encouragement in it) will do it only because they can't avoid it, and therefore act with Discouragement to faithful Officers, and such other pious Persons as out of a Love to God and their Neighbour bring them Informations, by giving them unnecessary Delays, and putting them under all manner of Disadvantages when they attend upon them on this Occasion: Nor by the Reproaches of bad Men, nay, of Friends and Relations, when you have the Laws of God and of the Nation, Her Majesty's, the late King's, and your late Representatives in Parliament Declarations, the publick Approbations of Ministers of State, so many Lords, Bishops and Judges of Two Kingdoms, and of the Nobility and Clergy of the Third, the Assistance of those that are already engaged in this Undertaking, the Esteem and Prayers of other good Men, and your own Conscience on your side. If this is a good Work, such Discouragements as these are to be expected in so degenerate an Age as we are fallen into, since Oppositions, either publick or private, under one pretence or other,

to

to good Designs, for the beating down of the Devil's Kingdom, have ever been in the World, and may, I think, ever be expected from wicked Men, who are the Devil's Instruments, whilst there are any such in it. Nay, such Obstructions as I have mentioned, and others of the same kind, have been, and may still be met with from many of those that are not accounted the worst sort of Men, and from whom Encouragement and Assistance in these Matters might be reasonably hop'd; tho' it may, in truth, appear a very shocking thing, and I am apt to think will be so to the Ages to come, that such as are not thought to be the Enemies of God and Religion, should with any Countenance continue to give open Obstructions to pious and legal, proper and successful Methods of putting the Laws of the Land in Execution for the Suppressing of Prophaneness and Vice, and the Saving of their Country from Ruine; and especially that they should do this in a Protestant Country, where these Methods have been approved in so publick and solemn a manner, by so many Persons in Authority in Church and State, that few, if any good Designs that have been set on foot in it, or in any other Christian Country, have ever been. *Oppositions*, and even *Suf-*

Sufferings, when they encounter us in this glorious Cause, are then, I think, to be born with Patience, if not with Cheerfulness, out of a Love to God and our Neighbour, and in hopes of an Everlasting Recompence for all our Sufferings in the Cause of our Lord and Master on the other side of the Grave.

To conclude, Sir, you are, I hope, by this time of Opinion, that there hath not been a matter of greater Consequence proposed to you perhaps in your Life, or a greater Opportunity offered you of doing more good to the World, nor probably ever may be. God grant that you may have a right Understanding of it, and a Will to act accordingly, zealously to pursue all proper Methods of Reformation, so as may be most for the Honour of God, the Interest of Mankind, and your everlasting Comfort. I may possibly, Sir, in a Month or two, desire of you the Trouble, I hope I might more justly say, the Pleasure, of an Account of some considerable Progress that you have made in this great Affair, directed to such a place as I may give you notice of in my Letter, when I may send you such other Directions as may be thought necessary, tho' I presume, that these I have now communicated to you, with those contained in the
Books

Books I herewith send you, and which your own Judgment and Experience may supply you with, may, generally speaking, be sufficient not only for yours and your Friends acting vigorously and with Advantage in the Places near you, but to enable you and them to set this Matter on foot in any Town or larger Village of the Kingdom, where you have an Acquaintance with, or but the bare Knowledge of any religious and tolerably prudent Person, to whom you may know how to send the Books I have mentioned; and shall communicate the Directions I have given you in this long Letter, for your full Instruction in this pious Work.

S I R,

Yours.


P O S T-

P O S T S C R I P T.

I Should, Sir, tell you, that the little Discourses against *Prophane Swearing and Cursing, Drunkenness, Uncleanneß, and Prophanation of the Lord's Day, &c.* and the *Answer to the Scandalous Objections that are made against those pious and useful Persons as, out of a Love to God and their Neighbour, give Informations to the Magistrates of these Enormities,* which are sent you, with the other Books, may be given to such as are guilty of any of these Offences, and especially by such as inform against them, and at that time that they are convicted of these Offences, by the Magistrates, (with whom, or their Clerks, some Number of them may be lodg'd, to be thus disposed of) for the furthering of their Repentance for their Sin, that they may avoid the everlasting Punishment of it, at a time when they are so apt to be awakened to Consideration, and a sence of their Sin, which are great Steps towards Conversion, by the Temporal Punishment and Shame that is inflicted upon them; and that moreover such Offenders may be fully convinc'd, that the Persons that bring them to Punishment do therein as becomes good Christians, and

Mem-

Members of the Community, for religious Ends, and with charitable Intentions towards them; and may not therefore add to their Sin and Folly by entertaining any unchristian Resentments for their thus acting; and this is a Method that I find recommended by those that are concerned in some of the *Societies for Reformation*, who have given away, at their own Expence, a great many Thousands of them, besides about Ten Thousand of the larger Books which I have sent you relating to this Design. I might have likewise added, that this great Work may be very much promoted by yours and your Friends acquainting well-inclined Persons, that they may be very serviceable in buying up and giving away any of these Books, as of the *Account of the Societies*, and the *Help to Reformation*, which are now, for the General Benefit of the Publick, sold at a very unusual cheap rate.

 The foregoing Letter being published for general Use, is printed in a Sheet of Paper, for the Conveniency of sending it by the Post to any well-disposed Persons in any part of the Kingdom, for the Promoting of the Work of Reformation. Sold by T. Leigh and D. Midwinter in St. Paul's-Church-Yard, and J. Downing in Bartholomew-Close near West-Smithfield.

The Obligations of a
Justice of the Peace,

To be diligent in the Execution of the *Penal-Laws* against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, for the Effecting of a *National Reformation*.

In a Letter to a Friend.

S I R,

I Gave you in my last long Letter an Account of the *Progress* of the *Reformation of Manners*, and I could not but hope that you would be well pleased to hear, that the *Endeavours* of it, that have so lately obtain'd the *Approbation* and *Countenance* of many of the *Lords*, *Bishops* and *Judges* of the *Kingdoms of England* and *Ireland*, and of the *Nobility* and *Clergy* of *Scotland*, have been successful for the giving a *Check* to the horrid *Debauchery* and *Impieties* of the *Age*; that Attempts of this kind were likewise carrying on in our *Neighbouring* and some more remote *Nations*; and in several of them,
by

by the Influence of our Endeavours here, which may give you just hopes not only of a further Reformation in those Countries, but that this great Work will be set on foot in other parts of the World, when the Account of the *Scheme* and *Success* of our *Endeavours* therein, which is now Translating into the more general Languages, are known to them; and having done this more particularly in that long Letter, I then offered you some Motives and Directions for your engaging with more Advantage in this Noble Undertaking: But I consider'd you, *Sir*, therein only as a private Christian, and a good Member of the Community; as one without any publick Authority, and under no other Obligations to be active in this pious Work than what your Religion in general, and your Baptismal Engagements (whereby you were list'd in your Lord and Master's Service, against the Devil's Kingdom) laid upon you, which I hope, you thought sufficient to engage you in it; but having understood, that since the Regulation of the *Commission of the Peace* in your County, you are put into that Commission, I take the freedom to lay before you some other Considerations that are proper and more peculiar to you, as you are in that publick Capacity.

And give me leave, Sir, to put you in Mind, that besides your Obligations as a Christian and a Member of the Community, to concur in promoting this hopeful Reformation, you are, if you take upon you this Commission, under other Engagements, as you are a *Magistrate*, and have taken an Oath and a publick Trust upon you to execute the Laws, which surely, Sir, are very great and indispensable Obligations. But further, by your being invested with Authority, you have thereby a manifest Advantage for the furthering of this Work, which private Persons are also without, who, notwithstanding all their Disadvantages, act herein with great Concern and Success, in most Parts of the Kingdom, and who, by doing so, are as it were Eyes and Hands to *Magistrates*, and give them a still greater Advantage, and which do make such *Magistrates* as do not exercise their Authority, and endeavour to discharge their Obligations in some measure as they ought, now appear more inexcusable.

If then 'tis so evident, that *Magistrates* are thus under various and indispensable Obligations to execute the Laws for the suppressing of *Vice* and *Prophaneness*, Can any *Magistrates* that are willing to acquit themselves herein as they ought,
think

think that they ought to do less, tho' they should therein receive Discouragements from wicked Men, and from some perhaps of their own Body, then to suppress the open Violations of those Laws, when they come to have a Knowledge of them; as *Prophane Swearing* and *Cursing*, by Persons of what Quality soever, then to take their Walks sometimes, as some truly honourable Magistrates here do, (whose Names will surely be mentioned with Honour in the Records of Ages to come;) to observe what Disorders there are committed in their Corporations, or other Places near them; to inspect into publick Houses on the *Lord's-Day*, as the Justices of *Middlesex* have formerly, and very lately agreed among themselves to do, (as appears by their * printed Orders of Sessions) for the Punishing and Preventing of *Tipling* in them; and to hinder *Drovers*, *Carriers*, &c. travelling on that Day; and to send out their Constables for the same purpose on the *Lord's-Day*; and on other Days of the Week ordering of them to go about the Streets, and into the Markets, and other publick Places, to take up *Swearers*, *Drunkards*, and *lewd Persons*, out of Houses of ill Fame, and to bring 'em before them to be punished, (which Constables may do without a Warrant from a Justice)

* *Middlesex*
Order Jan.
13. 1691.
Middlesex
April 13.
1702.

ftice) and to make Examples of ſuch Officers
 as they find negligent in their Duty in theſe
 Matters; and more-eſpecially to give Diſpatch,
 Reſpect, and all poſſible Encouragement to ſuch
 pious and highly uſeful Perſons as often with
 great Trouble, Difficulty and Hazard, (and
 too frequently with greater Damage and Charge
 to them than the Penalty which the Law in-
 flicts on the prophane and vicious Perſons that
 they inform againſt amounts to) for the Sup-
 preſſing of the Diſhonour that is ſo openly
 offered to Almighty God, the temporal and
 eternal Ruine of their Fellow-Chriſtians, and
 of National Judgments, bring them Informa-
 tions of any of the Diſorders that I have men-
 tioned, or any other Breaches of the Laws of
 the ſame kind; to which they have been in-
 cited and encouraged by His Maſteſty's *Procla-*
mations, the * printed *Orders of Sessions* of the
 Juſtices of the Peace of many Counties and
 Cities of the Kingdom, the Diſcourſes of many
 of our Reverend Divines lately publiſhed, and
 the *Circular Letter* of the Lord Arch-Biſhop of
 Canterbury, dated *April 4. 1699.* in which the
 Biſhops of that Province concurred; wherein,
 as I told you in my laſt, Miniſters are directed
 by their Biſhops to put the Laity in mind that

* Orders of
 Sessions that
 encourage good
 Chriſtians &
 good Citi-
 zens to give
 Informations
 to Magiſtrates
 againſt pro-
 phane and vi-
 cious Perſons.
Glouceſter Ju-
ly 8. 1691.
Middleſex Ju-
ly 9. 1691.
London 1691.

'tis their Duty to give such Informations, and to meet frequently together, to consult upon the most advisable Methods of doing it; and such Meetings, and others of this kind, which we call *Societies for Reformation of Manners*, and which so many Persons in Authority in Church and State have in so publick and solemn a manner declared their high Approbation of, do give Magistrates mighty Advantages for the effectual Suppressing of our Debauchery and Impieties, and must, Sir, give you and other Magistrates that have a sense of their Duty in this respect, a great Encouragement to be zealous in it.

I shall not, Sir, after I have laid before you your Obligations, and many and great Advantages for your furthering this Noble Work, represent to you how dishonourable it is in itself, and may ere long appear to the whole Nation, for Magistrates to take solemn Oaths and Trusts upon them to execute Laws, and to be grossly negligent therein, and even to obstruct the Execution of those Laws wherein the Interest of Religion is unquestionably so much concerned, after they have in their *printed Orders* assured the World they would do the contrary; nor the many and fatal Mischiefs that such unhappy Magistrates bring on Multitudes of particular

Hereford Oct.
5. 1691.
Buckingham
Oct. 8. 1691.
Bodmin 1691.
London 1691.
Middl. 1692.
Middl. 1693.
London 1694.
London 1697.
Middl. 1697.
London 1698.
Glocest. 1698.
Middl. 1698.
London 1699.
Lincoln 1700.
London 1700.
Salop 1700.
Surry 1700.
Lincoln 1701.
Westminster
Ap. 8. 1702.
Middlesex Ap.
13. 1702.
Surry April
14. 1702.
Southampton
Ap. 14. 1702.
Somerset Apr.
14. 1702.
London April
15. 1702.
Preston April
16. 1702.
Manchester
Ap. 23. 1702.
Suffex April
1702.
Ex. stol April
1702.
Chester April
1702.
Gloucester Ap.
1702.
Monmouth May
26. 1702.
&c.

ticular Persons, and on the Nation in general,
 and consequently, what a heavy load of Guilt
 they do thereby contract, who have no regard
 to their Duty in any Instances of it that I have
 herein mentioned, and do thereby evidently
 obstruct the *Reformation of Manners* that is so
 happily carrying on not only in these Three
 Kingdoms, but in other Parts of the World, His
 Majesty by His *Proclamations*, and our late Re-
 presentatives in Parliament by their *Address* to Him,
 having publicly declared, *That the Debauchery*
and Prophaneness of the Nation is chiefly owing to the
Negligence of Magistrates in the Execution of their
Office, and their ill Example; which ought to be
 so dreadful a Consideration to all that are con-
 cerned in the Charge, that I shall not offer to
 aggravate it: I choose rather to say, that as any
 former Remisness of Magistrates, or perhaps
 Backwardness of your Brethren, or of the Ma-
 gistrates of your County, can by no means be
 allowed to be a sufficient Excuse for your Neg-
 lecting to do what you have unquestionable
 Authority, great Advantages, (at this time
 more-especially) and many Engagements upon
 you to do; so in the faithful Discharge of your
 Duty, you may render your self a Blessing to
 your Country, and to the whole Kingdom;
 nay,

may, by your zealous Execution of your Trust and Authority in these Matters at this Juncture, and by the Influence of your good Example, you may be in some degree instrumental in the Reforming not only of Christendom, but of Mankind, and this will moreover undoubtedly procure you the Approbation of your own Conscience, and the Applause of good Men, and may be a means of your obtaining an Everlasting Recompence in the next World. Which is sincerely wished by,

SIR,

Yours.

[

The

The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the Grand-Jury for the County of Middlesex, on Monday the 2 d. of June, 1701. to the Court of the King's-Bench.

HIS Majesty by his repeated Proclamations having taken Notice, with great Concern, of the open and avowed Practice of *Vice and Prophaneness* in this Kingdom, to the high Displeasure of Almighty God, and great Scandal of Christianity; and that this hath been occasioned in a great measure by the Neglect of putting in Execution those good Laws which have been made for the Suppressing and Punishing thereof.

And His Majesty having strictly charged and commanded all his Subjects, in their several Places and Stations, to be very vigilant and strict in the Discovery and effectual Prosecution and Punishment of all Persons who shall be guilty of *Blasphemy, prophane Swearing and Cursing, excessive Drinking, Lewdness, Prophanation of the Lord's-Day*, or other Dissolute, Immoral or Disorderly Practices, as they will answer it to Almighty God, and upon pain of his highest Displeasure.

And we the Grand Inquest of this County, having received an excellent Charge from this Honourable Court, enjoining our Enquiry into the Matters aforesaid. We think our selves obliged to take Notice of the great Advantages which this County has received from the Zeal and Diligence of good Magistrates putting the Laws in Execution against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, and
likewise

likewise of those worthy Gentlemen and Divines, who in this County meet in *Societies*, for the effectual assisting them therein, and who have been encouraged thereunto by the publick Approbation of many of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Honourable Judges.

Yet notwithstanding, through the Negligence of Constables, Headboroughs, and other Inferior Officers, the Execution of the said Laws is very much obstructed, to the great Encouragement of Offenders, and Prejudice of the Publick.

We do therefore present such of the Constables and Headboroughs as we have found negligent in the Execution of their Offices.

The Presentment of the Grand-Jury for the City of London, at Justice-Hall in the Old-Bailey, the 4th day of June, 1701. and Ordered by the Court to be Printed.

THIS Honourable Court having taken Notice, in the admirable Charge given to us, of the great Advantages which this City hath received from the Zeal and Industry of those Gentlemen and Citizens, who, in and about this City, are concerned in *Societies*, for the Promoting more effectually the Execution of the Laws against *Prophaneness* and *Debauchery*, in pursuance to His Majesty's Proclamations, and who have received the publick Approbation of many Persons in high Stations in Church and State.

We the Grand-Jury of this City, do think it becomes us to return our hearty Thanks to those worthy Persons who are thus engaged in *Societies*, for the Promoting a

Reformation of Manners, so absolutely necessary to our Welfare; and we hope their engaging so heartily in this Noble Design will be an Encouragement to others to join with them, for the effecting a more general Reformation.

The Presentment of the Grand-Jury for the County of Buckingham, at the Assizes held for the said County, 1701.

BEING encouraged by His Majesty's Proclamation now read to us, as also by your Lordship's most excellent Charge, we the Grand-Jury of the County of *Bucks*, do think we can do no less than to take Notice of the several *Societies* erected for the Promoting of a *Reformation of Manners*; and particularly we desire to return our hearty Thanks to those worthy Gentlemen and Clergy who meet Monthly at *Wendover*, in the said County, in order to effect the same. And we hope their appearing in so pious a Design will animate others to come in and join with them. And this we present as the particular Sentiment of us, whose Names are hereunto Subscribed.

The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the Grand-Inquest for the Assizes held at Northampton, for the said County, the 3d day of March, 1701.

WHEN we reflect on the many Blessings we enjoy under His Majesty's auspicious Reign, and pious Care, manifested by repeated Proclamations, to preserve

preserve us from *Vice* and *Immoralities*, (Enemies that have a very fatal Influence on a Nation and Kingdom) we cannot but think it a suitable Expression of our Gratitude and Duty at this time, to declare our Readiness and Resolution, in our respective Stations, to comply with His Majesty's Commands, by endeavouring, that not only such as are guilty of *prophane Swearing* and *Cursing*, *Excessive Drinking*, *Lewdness*, and other dissolute Practices, may be brought to deserved Punishment; but also that the Negligencies of Constables, Headboroughs, and other Inferior Officers, and such as keep disorderly publick Houses, wherein the *Lord's-day* is so frequently profaned by unnecessary Resorts thereunto, may be punished according to Law.

And we take this Occasion to return our hearty Thanks to those worthy Persons who meet in *Societies*, and have signalized their Zeal by Promoting a more general *Reformation of Manners* in this Kingdom; a Method approved and recommended by the concurrant Suffrages of many Noble Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Learned Judges both in this and our Neighbouring Nation.

The Presentment of the Gentlemen of the Grand-Inquest for the County of Southampton, at the Assizes held at Winton-Castle the 4th day of March, 1701.

COMMANDED by His Majesty's most excellent Proclamation against *Vice*, *Immorality* and *Prophaneness*, in pursuance of Your Lordship's Directions, excited by the pious Zeal of many worthy Persons engaged in *Societies* for the Promoting the Glorious Design thereof, encouraged

encouraged by that visible Success their joint Endeavours have, through God's Blessing, had in many Parts of this Kingdom towards effecting a *Reformation of Manners*: We take this Opportunity to express our Satisfaction thereat, and to profess our readiness to contribute our Assistance for the Advancement of so good a Work, and crave leave to lay before Your Lordship and this Honourable Bench, that we conceive the great Obstruction and Impediments hereunto do proceed, not only from the Negligence of Constables and other Officers in their respective Places, but also from the Multitude of Disorderly Ale-Houses, wherein not only excessive Drinking, and other vicious Practices, are promoted, but also an Opportunity given to dissolute and profligate Fellows resorting thereunto, to entice and allure Young Persons into wicked Confederacies, and *Prophanation of the Lord's-day*.

We therefore humbly hope, That all Magistrates, in their respective Stations, will use their utmost Endeavours to discourage and punish such evil Practices.

The Presentment of the Grand-Jury of the County of Nottingham, at the Assizes held for the said County the 14. day of March, 1701.

THE Honourable Court having, in their Charge to us, pressed the Obligation we lie under, to make diligent Enquiry into the Breach of those Excellent Laws made for the Suppressing of *Immorality* and *Prophaneness*, do think it becomes us, for the Encouragement of all such Persons who have voluntarily form'd themselves into *Societies*, and by their joint Endeavours have made themselves

selves more capable to be instrumental for the *Reformation of Manners*, to take Notice of their pious Zeal, and also of the visible Success that hath, through the Blessing of God, accompanied their Endeavours for obtaining the aforesaid End in many Parts of this Kingdom.

We crave leave to lay before Your Lordships and this Honourable Bench, that we conceive a great Obstruction and Impediment to this most excellent Design, proceeds not only from the Neglect of Constables and other Officers in their respective Places, but also from the great Numbers of Disorderly Ale-Houses in this Town, to which many idle and dissolute Persons do frequently resort, and allure others into the like vile Practices and Debaucheries with themselves; which publick Grievance, there have been some Endeavours to redress that have not yet met with the desired Success.

We therefore humbly beg and hope, That all Magistrates and others would contribute their utmost Endeavours for the Redress of those publick Grievances, and for the Encouragement of the aforesaid *Societies*, which will animate others that fear the Lord, are faithful Subjects to Her Majesty Queen *Anne*, (whom God preserve) and true Lovers of their Country, to join with them.

The Presentment of the Grand-Jury for the County of Monmouth, at the General Assizes held at Monmouth the 26th day of March, 1702.

HIS late Majesty's Proclamation against *Immorality* and *Vice*, back'd by the excellent Charge we received from Your Lordship at this present Juncture, hath obliged us seriously to weigh the several Inconveniences

cies that follow our too tender putting in Practice those wholesome Laws injoin'd by our former Legislators, as well against *Profaners* of the *Sabbath*, as other egregious Criminals.

The being rob'd of so good and glorious a Prince we have lately been bereaved of, cannot but be reckon'd among our greatest Calamities: but we dare not tax Heaven with Severity for the same when we consider that our Provocations have justly disarm'd us of so sure a Guard. We must acknowledge that our Sufferings are of our own creating, and our Punishments proceed from a general Guilt of our own. We shall not therefore pretend to extenuate our Failings by recriminating upon Inferior Officers; but do hereby promise, That nothing on our Parts shall be wanting for the future (either as Christians or Magistrates) to assist those that are already entered into *Societies* for stopping that Inundation of Vice we see ready to overflow us, or to encourage others in so worthy an Undertaking: hoping thereby as well to ingratiate our selves to that Omnipotent provoked Power, as to enervate that Prince who grows upon our Weaknesses, and establisheth his Empire upon the Ruine of our Religion, and Contempt of our Laws.

The Presentment of the Grand-Jury for the County of Derby, at the Assizes held for the said County April 14. 1702.

Commaned by Her Majesty's most excellent Proclamation against *Vice, Immorality* and *Prophaneness*, excited by the pious Zeal of many Worthy Persons engaged in *Societies* for promoting the Glorious Design thereof,

thereof, encouraged by the great Success their joint Endeavours have had (by the Blessing of Almighty God) in many parts of this Kingdom towards effecting a *Reformation of Manners*. We take this Opportunity (encouraged thereunto by the Charge this Day given to us) to express our great Satisfaction therein, to profess our Readiness to contribute our utmost Assistance for the Advancement of so good a Work, and to crave leave to lay before you, Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace,

That we humbly conceive, the great Obstructions and Impediments thereunto, do proceed not only from the Negligence of Constables and other Inferior Officers in their respective Places, but also from the Multitude of unnecessary Ale-Houses both in Market-Towns and the smaller Villages, wherein not only Excessive Drinking and other vicious Practices are promoted, but also an Opportunity given to dissolute and profligate Fellows resorting thereunto, to entice and allure Young Persons into *wicked Confederacies*.

We cannot doubt but that, whensoever any Persons shall have Occasion to resort to you with any Informations against Offenders, in order to their Conviction and Punishment, they will have all due Encouragement and Dispatch.

And we do humbly conceive, that *Prophaneness* and *Immorality* would not so shamefully abound, as now they do among us, if an Order of Sessions was directed to all Constables and other Inferior Officers, strictly requiring them diligently to do their Duties, in discovering and bringing to condign Punishment such Persons as shall dare to offend against those excellent Laws which are provided, and by our Pious and Gracious Queen commanded to be put in Execution, for the suppressing of *Vice*.

And we do humbly pray, that an Order of Sessions may be made and directed accordingly.

F I N I S.

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